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## LIMPETS.

By the outside look of things, there is scarcely a more anomalous creature than a limpet. A mollusc, soft and squashy, without limbs to grasp or horns to push, it has a power of adhesion which resists even a strong man's pull, and clings to its sterile home of slate or granite with a tenacity greater than energy, and more determined than aggression. Nothing short of a trick can whip it from its holding. Like a political party which can be swamped only by a *coup d'état*, a limpet can be detached only by sleight-of-hand, and the crafty insinuation of a 'persuader' unawares, thrust home before the boneless creature has had time to feel and resist. How comes it that an invertebrate like this can be so strong to resist, so all but unconquerable in its tenacity and immobility? A fighting crab can be broken up into little bits where a limpet is secure; but a fighting crab is to a limpet as a grenadier, six feet high and armed to the teeth, is to a little woman four feet nothing, and with no other weapon than may-be her tongue and her determination of Will Not. Yet, in any conflict short of fisticuffs between them, the little woman will hold on, and the grenadier will be nowhere.

The limpets of humanity are as odd in their own way as their prototypes on the sea-rocks, being for the most part as weak and as tenacious. Do you think that staying-power and having one's own way reside in those men so dear to novelists, whose lowering brows, square jaws, and resolute chins betoken qualities which rule men and fate, and are as the seals set against their charter of supremacy? Not a bit of it! These formidable-looking creatures can be conquered by the molluscs who only hold and resist—say No, and do not fight; and in general they are wise enough to acknowledge their victors. They may be kings of men in their own way, but that way is not one which subdues the limpet; and the fragile little woman with a shrill voice and a sharp nose, or her sister, phlegmatic, tenacious, and unimpressible, will have the whip-hand of them at all four corners. Neither

kind fights; for fighting implies activity; and the limpet has but the one quality of tenacity and repression—the power of saying 'I will not,' and of sticking to it; which is a very different thing from active contest.

No man has yet known how to influence the limpet to the reception of new methods. Old habits, old places, the forms of thought into which it was born, the range of knowledge to which it attained on its first and final essay up the steep hill of learning, are the foot-holds of security to which it clings as for dear life. Anything beyond is an impertinence if advised, a tyranny if enforced; but who can enforce anything whatsoever against the *vis inertia* which refuses to be moved, and says 'I will not accept?' That *vis inertia* is found for the most part to be superior to any amount of active energy, of brisk aggression; and tenacity wins the day which conflict would have lost. You detail a new truth; you reason it out from the beginning to the end; you shew how it grows by the irresistible process of logic from the premise which is undeniable, that two and two make four, to the conclusion, which is as undeniable, that four and four make eight. You trace it through its various stages of development from root to crowning flower; and when you have finished, your mental limpet looks you blankly in the face and says tranquilly: 'I do not agree with you; and I prefer the theory which springs from the radicle that two and two make five.' For the limpet the circle of the sciences ends at that point when he or she left school; and what more the world has gained since then is assigned without hesitation to Carlyle's Limbo of the Unveracities. Developments are not in his line; neither are aggregations; and he prefers the repose to be found in absolutism and arrestation. The sterile rock whereon he was cast at his birth, and where he manages to gather the poor nutriment by which he lives, is good enough for him; what does he care for the flowery pastures, the sublime heights of advanced science? He prefers his gritty granite and his wave-washed nutriment, brought and not sought; and the nobler forms of

thought—nobler but unsettling, difficult, distracting—may be the property of those who will. Only let him be safe from the whirl of opposing currents, free from the troubles, the dangers of selection from among a multitude of may-bes; let him be bound fast to his stable rock however sterile, and die the mental limpet—unchangeable, uneducable, impossible to influence, and incapable of development—that he has lived!

What is true of new thoughts, and facts even, is true also of habits. No power on earth can make the limpet among men change his ways or adopt strange modes of life and action. He would rather starve in the groove which gives him a scanty crust at just the same time, and served in just the same manner day after day and year after year, than break fresh ground for himself, and go further afield into plenty of a different forin and different surroundings from those to which he has been accustomed. Ask a limpet of this kind to emigrate—that is, to go where there is space for all and plenty for those who will work—and he tells you that he prefers to stick to his overcrowded rock at home, where the best will in the world for work cannot give him enough whereby to live as a man should, because there are two men for one job, and the earnings which would be enough for one have to be divided into insufficient portions for many. Paint nature and possibilities at the antipodes as you will, and however splendidly, not outside the truth; shew the one beautiful, fertile, facile, the other such as make men glad and great—he shakes his stolid head, and digs his stick into the ancestral sand, as he replies: 'I prefer home with starvation to foreign parts and plenty.'

As you cannot take him bodily, as the roc took Sindbad, and drop into the midst of the fat lands waiting for men to come and be made happy, you can only leave him to his scanty crust and to the plot of sand wherein he has planted his stick. But you think, when you hear him complain of the difficulties of getting anything to do in this swarming hive of ours, and of the miserable pay for it when got, and his domestic anxieties and his family shortcomings, that his limpet-like reluctance to move is, in point of fact, responsible for his misfortunes, and that, if he had chosen to accept new means, by this time he and his would have been rich and happy. Your only consolation is, that the creature had not the qualities fitted for the career proposed to him. He has just that one kind of strength which comes from inertia, the stability of a mass of dead matter left untouched and to itself; and a life that made calls on his energy would find the draft dishonoured. This molluscous 'inhabitiveness,' as the phrenologists call it, is the strong point of his nature, and he bears anything rather than lose his hold on things and places to which he has been accustomed, for the sake of the wider issues to be found elsewhere.

Women, naturally of a less wandering nature than men, have this kind of limpet-like tenacity to place very strongly developed; and women of the peasant class above all. To them, a removal of three miles from the old home is more than to others is the removal of so many hundreds; while translation from Cornwall to Cumberland is an infinitely more formidable expatriation than is the translation from England to India to their sisters of better estate. We once saw a Cornish woman in the deepest distress because of the migration

of her husband from the little cove where she had been born, and had lived all the thirty years of her life, to another about two miles distant. It was as if she had received marching orders for Timbuctoo, or was doomed to eternal separation from her mother, friends, and home. Her heart was broken, she said between her sobs, and she should never get over her sorrow. Which surely was a development of limpet tenacity, and holding on to the place of one's birth, about as extreme as can be imagined.

Try to teach a limpet new ways, and see where you land yourself. A woman who has been accustomed to feed her children improperly, to clothe them injudiciously, to manage them on wrong principles—shew her new ways and better ones: will she adopt them, think you? Will she do that which is unusual to her, and forbear to do that to which she has been accustomed? As little as her husband will leave his plot of sand at home, for rich acres over seas; as little as the mental limpet will accept new readings of old fables, new faces of old facts! What did for her mother, is good enough for her, she says, as she crams her baby with thick pottage, and lets her little ones get wet with the rain and dry again in the wind. What hawering is this about open drains and polluted water? They have had that ditch before their house ever since she can remember; the well in the yard near the byre served father and mother and all of them long before these new fashions in air and water came up. You may talk till you are hoarse of carburetted hydrogen and the like; what your limpet cannot see, and touch, and taste, that is for him or her a substance non-existing, and the dangers predicated are mere bogles set up to frighten fools. Your limpet will have none of them; so you may spare yourself all trouble, and leave the ditch and the well, the poisoned air and polluted water, where you find them; and when typhus and diphtheria break out in the household, it is God who sends the scourge, not the uneducability of the limpet which fosters it.

Incapable of education or of change, the limpet is also sure to stick when once placed. Woe to the inconstant person who has a limpet on her visiting list! No efforts short of mutilation by violence can dislodge the creature that holds on to the rock, and nothing short of the plain-dealing known generically as 'cutting,' can shake off the acquaintance who sticks closer than a brother, and is as tenacious as a burr. You have no wish to be on such very friendly terms with your limpet. You do not think that a casual acquaintance, made in the press of the season, as half a hundred others like to it have been made, carries with it obligations to which you must make part of your life subservient; and you secretly resent the devotion which demands so much trouble in the reception. Why should your limpet fasten itself on you so pertinaciously? It may be flattering, but all the same it is embarrassing to be made the arbiter of another's soul and life. You have no time to spare for so many requirements outside your own immediate duties; and you find it quite as much as you can do to regulate your own affairs with becoming zeal. To be asked for counsel at every turn, to be besought to guide a career with which you have nothing to do, and wherein you feel only the faintest, most tepid kind of interest, is a nuisance which you must have either an inordinate love of power and

praise, or a supremely kind heart, to endure with equanimity. Are the drawing-room curtains to be red or blue? Shall my dress be white or gray? Shall the dinner be fixed for the sixteenth or the seventeenth? and which school would you advise for Frank, Winchester or Harrow? The questions, small or large, which torment your limpet are made to torment you, on the principle of passing it on; and you have to bear on your own shoulders burdens which you neither packed nor strapped, because your friend is too molluscos to carry them on his or her own.

Your limpet has no sense of times or fitness, of the length of hours or the shortness of the days. He or she pervades your house at all times, from early morning to late at night, and sits as if the spirit of immobility had suddenly become incarnate. It may be that you are asked for direction on some pin-head kind of event; or it may be that you are not asked even for so much. All the same, the limpet sits, and you have to endure; unless you take politeness and hospitality by the shoulders and fling them out of the window before shewing your sessile mollusc the door. Commonsense would tell you that you were justified in so doing; for time is precious, and your duties are imperative; and really, if limpets will not learn without rough teaching, well—the teaching must then be rough, and the ‘persuader’ to dislodge them sharp and straight! Give a limpet an impression, and try hereafter to efface it. However erroneous it may have been, and however sharp your sorrow for having thoughtlessly given so much increased circulation to a falsehood, however clear your proof that you had been mistaken, and earnest your endeavours to put straight that which you had laid askew, your limpet is immovable. You had told him that Mr So-and-so had been found guilty of card-sharpping, and having told him, he believes what you said. It was you yourself who confessed that Mrs So-and-so was rather more than indiscreet in that matter with young Lovelace; and it is of no good to say that you had been misinformed in both cases. You rubbed the gritty falsehood on to that poor pulpy brain of your tenacious mollusc, and it holds what it has once got. It knows nothing of your plastic ‘yes’ to-day and ‘no’ to-morrow, your nomadic faith that anchors itself on the sand at night, and is floating in mid-ocean by the morning. What it has heard, that it receives; what it has once believed, that it holds, and no efforts can shake it from its place. Save for the inherent valuelessness of the creature itself, we know of no responsibility more appalling than that of determining a limpet’s creed, and giving it a surface whereto its poor, soft, flabby mind can cling, and whence it can never be detached. For with it, first impressions are everything, and the modifying power of reason is nowhere. It cannot shape itself to new conditions, nor accommodate itself to another set of circumstances. The waves which wreck strong ships, dash harmlessly over the passive pulpy mollusc sheltered beneath its shell of defiance, and holding on by its rock; the hand which can wield a sledge-hammer which can strike a man till he dies, cannot, so to speak, detach a miserable tenacious little bit of organised protoplasm, which has simply the force to resist and the power to hold on. It is wonderful; but in it we can read the tremendous force of negation, and what energy it takes

to move the inert mass of men to other regions of thought than those to which they have been accustomed, to lift them to higher states of knowledge than those whereto they attained in their learning days. Limpets as so many of us are, it is well to know the line that should be drawn between constancy and stolidity, fluid incapacity to retain and immovable inability to receive. To hold by that which is good, is one of the means of noble living, but to reject that which is better is the action of a fool. Even high aims are not always proof against this obstinate rejection of new views; as Bolingbroke says: ‘The confirmed prejudices of a thoughtful life are as hard to change as the confirmed habits of an indolent life;’ and we all know men who have crystallised into beautiful shape enough—but crystallised once and for all time—at an age when others have not completed half their growth, nor perfected half their powers of evolution. *Tenax et fidelis* is a good motto, but *excelesior* is a better.

## FALLEN FORTUNES.

## CHAPTER XIX.—RESUSCITATED.

If the doctor himself had not chanced to have burned his fingers at Commercial Snapdragon, and received not even a raisin for his pains, he would doubtless have been considerably puzzled by the laconic advice contained in the violated letter; but as it was, he could make a pretty shrewd guess at what was actually the state of the case. The *Lara*, he was at once persuaded, was not a ‘young person,’ but some speculative company in which Dalton was mixed up, and of which he would have been willing—if he could—to have washed his hands. Perhaps it was the collapse of this very concern that had brought him to his present pass; and if so, here was a confidential communication bidding him not to abandon hope with respect to it, but to hold on. It might, it is true, be only a word of advice concerning some ordinary business speculation, in which case there could at least be no harm in Dalton’s reading it; but the probability was that the tidings were good—calculated to put him in better heart.

Hitherto, the doctor had taken matters very quietly, and may seem to have pushed his philosophy—as philosophers sometimes will do, in the estimation of ordinary folks—to downright brutality; but both head and heart were in truth in accord with this good man, and were working together for good. Now that he had a stimulant—as he hoped—to administer to his patient upon recovery, he lost no time in resuscitating him. Raising Dalton’s head, and supporting it on his own knee, he drew from his pocket a bottle of what looked like smelling-salts, except that it was much darker, and applied it to his nostrils. Then he dropped a few red drops from a phial between his lips, whereupon the eyes of the patient opened slowly, stared at his companion without recognition, and then gazed inquiringly about him.

‘This cannot be death,’ murmured he feebly.

‘No; it is not death, Dalton; and if you are a man, you will thank God for it,’ said Dr Curzon gravely.

Not a word was spoken for some moments, during which ‘speculation’ began to gather in the patient’s eyes. The miseries of his position, from

which he had in vain attempted to escape, were forcing themselves upon his mind.

'You have deceived me, doctor,' groaned he despairingly. 'What you gave me was not laudanum.'

'I have saved you, rather, my friend, in spite of yourself. If it had not been for my pardonable stratagem—for never had a pious fraud so much of piety in it—you would have been at this moment in Gehenna, among all the other murderers.'

'Murderers! That is a matter of opinion,' answered the other doggedly. 'I should have put an end to my own life, it is true, and I do not thank you for having given me a longer lease of it.'

'Bah! I was not speaking of *your* life at all. When I say "murderer," I mean a man who slays not himself, but another; in some cases (when the thing is comparatively venial) from mere passion, in others with selfishness and calculation; in such a manner would you have slain—your wife!'

'My wife! my Edith! Why, I died for her.'

'You persuaded yourself so, no doubt; yet your death would have killed her. If I did not take you home—as I mean to do—this night, your very absence would go nigh to do it. We men being so worthless, have no conception, sir, at what a fancy price we are estimated by our women.'

'I am worthless enough, utterly worthless,' groaned Dalton; 'and much worse than worthless.—"Look you here, doctor!" exclaimed he, starting to his feet with sudden anger, 'you have been meddling in matters with which you have no concern, and which it is impossible you should understand. How it was that you guessed my purpose, I cannot tell, but being ignorant of my necessities, you had no right to thwart it. You have done me an injury—which being done, can never be repaired.'

'I know it,' replied the doctor coolly; 'and I am glad of it. Your plan of committing suicide, without its appearing to be suicide, has now failed for good and all. Should you ever again attempt this wickedness, John Dalton, no matter where, I will come, though it be from the ends of the earth, to bear witness to what has happened to-day!—Please to sit down, sir, or you will be observed from the house.'

'And this is one who calls himself my friend!' said Dalton, obeying him sullenly.

'Yes; and it is because I am your friend, and the friend of those who love you far beyond your deserts, that I am forced to do it. Of course, you are in some dire distress.—Nay!—for he was about to speak—'I do not seek to pry into its nature. I took it for granted that you were pushed very hard, and that you felt it most because it affected others.'

'I did, I did,' answered the wretched man.

'Well, would not those others have those ills to bear, and your loss as well? To one at least, that would have been worse than all other losses. I tell you—I, who know her well—that it would have slain her.'

Again there was a pause, during which Dalton sat thoughtful yet irresolute, with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and his fingers plucking at the grass.

'How did you come to know that I was thinking of this thing?' inquired he at length.

'From your own words and manner. I did not believe in your toothache, from the beginning.

And if you had no toothache, why should you need laudanum? Then again, in our first talk, you said, with respect to having your tooth out, "I cannot take chloroform;" whereby you wished to put the idea of your having heart-disease into my mind, before you came to consult me about your health. These suspicions, slight in themselves, were strengthened and corroborated by your behaviour during our interview. When I asked you, "Is your life insured?" it was not, as you imagined, from any idea that it was in danger from disease, but to discover whether those belonging to you—for I never paid you the ill compliment of supposing those were not uppermost in your thoughts—would reap a benefit from your decease. Your whole manner under the examination was artificial and unlike yourself; and your replies were technical replies—not natural ones, such as are given by genuine patients, but learned out of a book. When I said, "You have heart-disease, you think?" quite suddenly, you did not put your hand there, as a man probably would have done who really had it; yet it was evident to me all along that you wished me to believe so. Then again—in spite of my suggesting other remedies—you reiterated your wish for laudanum, which at the same time you strenuously objected to my putting down in my little account. Taking all these things into consideration, I said with perfect truth, that "I should not be surprised if you died suddenly," for by that time I felt convinced that it was your intention to put an end to your own existence.'

'I thought I had convinced you that I had heart-disease,' observed Dalton naively, his mind for the moment diverted from its gloom by the doctor's statement.

'No, my friend; you only convinced me that you wanted to have it. When a man says "I thought," when he ought to say "I feared," as you did, he generally means "I wish." I could not tell you my suspicions, lest in so doing I might precipitate the catastrophe—though, in truth, I never guessed how near it was; but I resolved to tell you wife.'

'Tell my wife! Why, you might have killed her.'

'What! you can see danger, where you could not see destruction? Do you suppose my hint of what you meditated could have harmed her worse than the news of what you had done? It was my duty, of course, to set her on her guard; to provide her with remedies, in case you should put your rash design into effect; and I was taking her the very things in my pocket with which I have just brought you back to life, when I heard that you had not returned to Riverside. Of course, if it had been really laudanum which you carried away with you from my surgery, no human power could have saved you; but as it is, you are none the worse than you were three hours ago.'

'And none the better,' answered Dalton wearily.

'But others are better—those others for whom you profess to have risked so much.—Come, be a man, since you must needs live on. There is work for you in the world of some sort, as for every one else. And you, of all men, with your troops of friends'—

Hitherto, although striking almost at hazard, the doctor had been very successful in his arguments, but here for the first time he touched a wrong chord.



'Work!' cried Dalton bitterly; 'nay, that is just what is denied me. It is not much, one would imagine, to ask of Fortune, permission to spend one's life in toil, yet she will not grant it to me.'

'Pshaw! she has refused it to ten thousand men to-day, sir, as worthy as yourself, and with more pressing needs.'

'That is impossible, Curzon. You do not know—Well, I will tell you,' said Dalton, suddenly interrupting himself. 'This man, to whom you would apply your maxims of philosophy, whose wife and children—and their needs—you are as well acquainted with as himself—has been ruined. When I say Ruined, I mean it; and by his own insensate selfishness and folly.'

'Don't use such hard names, my good friend,' interposed the doctor quietly, 'because, though you apply them to yourself, they may fit other people. I have been ruined myself by one of the most promising and remarkable mines'—

'Not the *Lara*?' cried Dalton, grasping his companion's arm in passionate excitement.

'I am speaking of years ago, my friend,' answered the other. 'You must not imagine that you are the only person who has played with fire and burned his fingers.'

'But it is not my fingers only, man. My whole body has been, so to speak, reduced to ashes.'

'I have known even that to happen—commercially—and yet the whole body to rise again like the Phoenix.—By-the-bye, I have a letter for you in my pocket, which I fancy may be of some importance.'

'That is not very likely,' answered the other indifferently. 'I have had a good many letters lately, of which I have thought as much myself, until I came to open them.'

'Well, open *this*; it is marked *Immediate*, you see.—I hope it is good news?'

This question was not put for several moments, during which Dalton, having read the single line which formed the contents of the letter, was examining it, and even its address, with the most eager curiosity.

'I can see there is good news,' repeated the doctor; 'come, confess it.'

'I don't know,' replied the other excitedly. 'It may prove so; yet I scarcely know how.'

'Then there is Hope at the bottom of it,' returned the doctor cheerfully. 'We will not think of poisoning ourselves any more, for want of Hope.'

'This is the best friend I have yet had—next to yourself, doctor,' said Dalton, still poring over the letter. 'Yet, he only signs himself *Verbum Sap.* Imagine a man like me, with my "troops of friends," as you were saying, being indebted to an anonymous correspondent for the first gleam of comfort!'

'Friends are often powerless to help one, though with all the will in the world,' observed the doctor; but the remark was unheeded.

'Stick to the *Lara*,' muttered Dalton. 'This advice would surely never have been sent, if an opportunity was not about to be afforded me of escaping from my responsibility. Yet, who could have sent it? There is hardly any one, save Holt, who is aware of my connection with it. It is very, very strange.'

'Come, Dalton, we must now go back to River-

side,' observed the doctor authoritatively. 'Every minute of your absence, remember, gives a pang to your wife.'

'At once, then,' said Dalton, stepping out, as he spoke, towards home with an elasticity that did not escape his companion's notice. The one tiny spark of hope had already relit the embers of life within him.

'Remember, my friend, you have been seven hours from home, and will have to account for them. You are a married man, however, and doubtless fertile in excuses.'

'Seven hours!' exclaimed Dalton in astonishment; but a look at his watch confirmed the doctor's statement.

'You would have slept half the night here, had I not awakened you by my incantations,' continued the latter. 'Now, let us both be in the same tale to account for this. You were coming over to Sanbeck to see me about your toothache; and finding me out—you *did* find me out, you know—you waited until I came home, and so you were delayed. But there; your wife will be too well pleased to see you, I'll warrant, to ask very searching questions. And if she only knew how near'—

'Nay, doctor; spare me. Some day, when she is strong and well, and I am prosperous—you know what "some day" means—she shall thank you with her own lips for what you have just done. I could almost thank you myself, if this news here can be depended upon; and he clasped the letter between his hands as though it were some priceless treasure.'

'Never mind the thanks, my friend. I am but the humble instrument by which Another has given you a new life—do not cast it away so rashly as the old one.—And I say'—this with a flourish of his stick—'mind they send my pony home at once, or else my patients will be coming into the world and going out of it without my help; a thing not to be endured.'

So soon as his companion had left him, Dalton discovered—whether he should be grateful to him for life or not—how much he had owed to the good doctor for his cheerful companionship and out-speaking. His heart once more sank beneath him as he drew nearer to Riverside and his dear ones; for what was there to cheer him now, more than there had been when he had sought death for lack of cheer, a few hours ago, save this small scrap of writing, unsigned, unwarranted, and even without direct promise of good of any kind. Its very vagueness, however, was in some sort encouraging, since it gave wide room for hope.

The river was less rapid as he crossed it now, and he had leisure for thought as he plied the oar; but no suggestion occurred to him as to who that mysterious giver of advice respecting the *Lara* might be. Holt, it was true, might help him to a guess at this; but Holt, something whispered to him, was the very last man with whom he ought to confer on such a matter.

Dalton's boat was seen from the windows of the house, and Kitty and Tony came running down to the landing to welcome his return.

'Where have you been, papa? You have frightened us almost into fits.'

Then he told them, half-laughingly, how he had missed the doctor, whom he had gone to consult about a toothache, and then met him returning home

—for if ever there was a case where ‘the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth’ might not be told, it was surely his; and in their joy at seeing him, they did not question him very closely. Edith was not down-stairs among the welcome or reprovers (‘A pretty fright you gave us,’ said Mrs Campden; ‘it is my belief you have come home so late merely to have an excuse for not dressing for dinner’); but was in her own room, waiting for him, with a pale face and anguished eyes.

‘O darling, thank Heaven you are come!’ cried she, as she clasped him in her arms. ‘It was very wrong of me, and very wicked, but do you know, John, I had almost begun to fear’— She hesitated, and with her hand pressed to her side, panted, as much from emotion as for breath.

‘What, dearest? What was there to fear?’ asked her husband caressingly.

‘I almost feared that you had been so cruel as to have deserted us, and gone to seek rest in the grave, alone.’

Dalton felt at that moment that if he had indeed been so cruel, he would have deserved, not rest, but eternal retribution.

### HOMES OF THE LONDON POOR.

AMONG the men who distinguished themselves as sanitary improvers during the past forty years, a prominent place must ever be given to the late Dr Southwood Smith, who was unceasing in his endeavours to agitate the subject of town-improvement in the interests of health. Drawing attention to the horrid condition of Bethnal Green and adjoining districts in the metropolis, Dr Smith never desisted till all this was changed. As an encouragement to sanitary reformers of the present day, we may briefly tell what he was able to effect.

In 1844, the Health of Towns Association held its first public meeting. Lord Normanby, though defeated in 1841 and 1844, got the Health of Towns Act passed in 1848. In 1846, Dr Smith established that Metropolitan Association for the Improvement of the Dwellings of the Industrial Classes, which was the forerunner of all the Peabody, Waterlow, and other associations with which we have become so familiar. In 1855 (the year in which his celebrated lecture in Edinburgh was given), he could report that in London, remittent fever, ague, and malignant sore throat were things of the past. And in 1861, he could die contented, having seen seven millions of the public money devoted to sanitary reform. One who knew his indefatigable labours in the cause, and who still is working in East London, reports that in a district of seventy-five thousand population, only forty-one cases of fever, and one hundred and nine of febricula, came under notice. In Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, the drainage is as good as in Marylebone or Belgravia; the houses are supplied with water, and open gutters are done away, and courts are paved. It is no longer possible to bring before the well-to-do classes the terrible thought, that whereas in well-ventilated and well-cared-for parts of the town, only one-fifth of the children die before they

attain their fifth year, in the worst localities one-half die before they attain that age—‘sacrificed as needlessly as if they were taken out on Bethnal Green and shot.’

Dr Smith worked even as he thought, on a grand scale; nothing short of sweeping and sufficient reforms could content him. How successful the reforms then inaugurated have been, the present condition of East London at this moment, as compared with fifty years ago, affords ample testimony. And yet; let any one walk down Commercial Road, or pass through any of the closer courts and alleys, with which not Whitechapel alone, but our whole metropolis, is intersected, and he will perceive that evils remain, with which sanitary reformers and building societies are unable to grapple. It was quite true that to house people better was a first and imperative step towards the prevention of disease and death; that to give light and air and water was imperative, if any improvement in the physical condition of the people was to be made. But there was, as there generally is, another side to the question, and it was this: the destructive habits of the classes belonging to the lowest stratum of society render them totally unfit to be the occupants of model lodging-houses. To say nothing of the little fact, that these classes could not easily be induced to occupy them—they would cease to be model lodging-houses if they did. Dust-bins utterly unapproachable; cabbage-leaves, and rotting fish, and every kind of dirt lying in the passages and on the stairs—the stairs themselves often inches thick with dirt; good drains rendered useless by being stuffed up, locks wrenched off doors, taps spoiled, and windows broken, are all characteristic features in the lives of certain classes, who are men and brothers for all that, and much of whose ignorance and degradation lies at our own doors.

In a little work before us, *Homes of the London Poor*, recently issued, the writer, Miss Octavia Hill, records how some of these difficulties on a considerable scale have been met and overcome in a large district in London; the means used, and the results at present attained. By a very slow and gradual process, Miss Hill—grand-daughter of Dr Southwood Smith—who had spent much thought on efforts (small at first) for the amelioration of the condition of her poor neighbours, came to the conclusion, that if the people's houses were bad, partly because they were badly built and overcrowded, ‘they are tenfold worse because the habits of their occupants are what they are.’ There was need for an entirely new system of management and supervision in the houses let to the swarming population of our courts, if any real good was to be done; an army of volunteers was wanted, if the work was to be done effectually; and if it was to be done on a wide scale, it was essential that it should not be merely philanthropical, but that houses let under the new conditions should pay. Having arrived at this conclusion, Miss Hill consulted Mr Ruskin, whose dreams have generally

a practical basis. He at once risked three thousand pounds in the experiment, and with the money three houses in Marylebone were purchased—'well-built houses, but in a dreadful state of dirt and neglect. The place swarmed with vermin; the paper, black with dirt, hung in long strips from the walls; the drains were stopped, the water-supply out of order.' All these things were put in order, *but no new appliances of any kind were added*, it being determined that the tenants should wait for these till they had proved themselves capable of taking care of them. 'A regular sum is set aside for repairs, and this is equally divided between the houses. If any of it remains, after breakage and damage have been repaired, at the end of the quarter, *each tenant decides* in what way the surplus shall be spent, so as to add to the comforts of the house.' This plan, says Miss Hill, has worked admirably; the loss from carelessness has decreased to an amazing extent. And the lodgers prize the comforts they seem in some measure to have earned.

The plan has since been tried on a much larger scale with equal success. Punctuality in collecting rents is one of the first principles enforced, and a lady collector and supervisor substituted for the 'resident landlady,' whose influence too often is of a wholly injurious kind. Miss Hill quotes instances, but too familiar to all who are acquainted with such property, in which intemperance is really a passport to favour; and the lodger who will drink most with his landlord—who is often the small publican of the court—has the best chance of his debt for rent being long borne with. But Miss Hill quotes a worse case, in which a small undertaker was the landlord. The man lived some little distance from his property, and confined his dealing with it to somewhat fruitless endeavours to collect the rents on a Sunday morning. In discussing the value of the property with her, he said, very straightforwardly: 'Yes, miss, of course there are plenty of bad debts. It's not the rents I look to, but the deaths I get out of the houses.' The man meant nothing but the ghastly fact he stated, that the deaths yielded him profit enough. And Miss Hill, looking at the condition of the people and property referred to, found 'a truth ringing with awful irony through his words.'

Another principle steadily enforced under the system we are considering, is to allow no *under-ground* lodgers; the former occupants of the cellars have to go, or are induced to take a room on the ground-floor. This arrangement is in itself a great civilising step. Then to help the people to help themselves. To allow no bad debts—the tenant who cannot or will not pay must go. To induce the people to save. To employ the tenants in slack seasons. All this is the work of the rent collector.

One of the worst courts in Marylebone came under Miss Hill's management. The houses were all crowded with inmates, and were in a deplorable condition—the plaster was dropping from the walls; the staircases were perfectly dark, the banisters gone, *having been burnt as firewood by the*

*tenants*. The wash-house, full of lumber belonging to the landlord, was locked up. The dust-bin in front of the houses was accessible to the whole neighbourhood. The state of the drainage was in keeping with everything else. One large but dirty water-butt received the water laid on for the houses. It leaked, and those who did not fill their jugs when the water came in, or had no jugs to fill, had no water. This court is now under Miss Hill's own management. During the four years she has held it, she has *never* allowed a second week's rent to become due. The place has been made to pay itself for new grates and new windows (out of one hundred and ninety-two panes only eight were unbroken); the drains have been put in order, a slate cistern fixed, the yard and foot-path paved, staircases repaired; and—what is the real point of the whole—the tenants (of course subject to ordinary fluctuations) are the same people who lived under the disorder and discomfort of the old régime. Five per cent. interest has been paid on all capital invested; and already interest has been paid on capital spent in building a large room where the tenants can assemble on various occasions. It serves as a club-room, as a place for boys' or girls' evening classes; and on Saturday evenings the tenants know they will find friends there to take their savings, and help them in a variety of ways, such as finding work for those who want it, suggesting where places may be obtained, &c.

Miss Hill states that the class with which she deals is far below the ordinary mechanic, and that she has never yet succeeded in inducing them to save for old age; but it is a great advance that they will bring their small payments against sickness, or for clothes. The elder girls are gradually educated to scrub passages and staircases for the general benefit, and are remunerated for their trouble.

There is nothing Utopian in Miss Hill's scheme, only a gradual training of a rough population into habits of order, cleanliness, and self-respect. The great difficulty of the plan is the need for earnest volunteer workers, educated women, bright and active, who will patiently week by week take some portion of the work (very practical work it is) on their own shoulders; for there are hundreds of courts with a teeming population which would immensely benefit by such an organisation. As the work has widened out, the question has not unnaturally arisen: If volunteer work can accomplish so much, and the better training of the people remedy so many existing evils—physical evils, we mean—is there need for state interference? for instance, is there real need for that Artisans' Dwellings Bill of which we hear so much? The little work before us deals with this question fully. For some time, Miss Hill says, she hoped for success from the gradual spread of individual effort; but as the work widened, its enormous magnitude dawned upon her, and she realised that there were obstacles to the successful prosecution of the work in certain districts, which neither individuals nor societies could overcome. All the philanthropic efforts put together—the Metropolitan Association, the Peabody Trustees, Sir Sydney Waterlow's Company, and the Baroness Burdett Coutts, had only succeeded in housing twenty-six thousand people—not a great deal more than half the number yearly added to the population of London; while for her own scheme of improving the tenants, and making

them fit for improved dwellings, by a gradual process, she found, in working the plan on a larger scale, the hopeless condition of much of the cottage property with which it would be necessary to deal: courts so inclosed that the light of the sun could not penetrate; nests of fever, which needed not restoration, but demolition; desirable houses with defective titles; houses radically and incurably afflicted with ground-damp. Some houses were found which might be condemned and pulled down under Mr Torrens' Act; but that Act gives no power of compensating the owner; nor does it empower any public body compulsorily to acquire the different interests in the defective houses, so as to render the desired reforms possible.

In this difficulty, those most interested in the whole question heard of an Act passed in 1866 for the improvement of Glasgow, where a population of fifty thousand people had been crowded in to eighty acres. The promoters of that Act had come to the conclusion that light and air were necessary ingredients in the well-being of a great city, had applied to parliament for power to borrow a million and a quarter, had marked the bad parts on a plan, and obtained powers to pull down, rebuild, or sell, as might be thought best. The result, as all who know Glasgow can testify, has been eminently satisfactory. That city has not only got an Improvement Act, but has carried it into effect in such a way as to bring about the most thorough sanitary reform. The same thing may be said as regards Edinburgh, for which an Improvement Act was procured in 1867; the results to the present time being eminently satisfactory.

And if, argues Miss Hill, powers of compulsory purchase, such as have been given to Edinburgh and Glasgow, such as are given railway companies, such as are conferred on the Metropolitan Board of Works when streets are widened, or new thoroughfares made, could be vested in a body representing the ratepayers of all London, there would be some chance of effectually grappling with the evil in its entirety. Such a body might destroy houses, and relet sites to builders or building companies, who would construct suitable houses. In many cases, more convenient rooms could be let at a lower rent, and a larger population comfortably housed on a now overcrowded space, by simply raising the height of houses which consist of two stories only. Looking at these facts, Miss Hill and those who work with her earnestly desire the passing of some such Act as the Artisans' Dwellings Bill, whereby the demolition of unfit dwellings shall be assured, and everywhere a way for the free passage of air secured.

But while desiring state interference as to sanitary matters, Miss Hill still maintains, and has but too abundant evidence to support her point, that the real reform must come from within, and must be the work of gradual training, and the bringing of higher influences to bear on the units who make up the mass. The Glasgow authorities whom she consulted, said to her: 'The people displaced from the old wynds are making many of their new houses nearly as unhealthy as the old ones, from their fearful habits; they have not been improved by mere change of surroundings.' Those who have seen the successful working of her plan are anxious to extend it further; there is abundance of money, 'and courts beyond courts

which might be purchased and improved;' it is the human agency, the whole army of kindly, clear-headed, practical volunteer labourers who are needed.

### MY FRIEND OF THE THOUSAND ISLANDS.

THERE is no one like him! at least I think so, and I am sure you would agree with me, if you knew him as I do. How and when we met, you would never guess, but you shall hear all about it.

We had started on a summer tour—my father, Sister Alice, Cousin Fred, and I; and after a flying visit to gay Saratoga, a never-to-be-forgotten week at Niagara, and a dull Sunday in Toronto, we had just arrived at Alexandria Bay, Thousand Islands, *en route* for Montreal. Although the hotel was crowded to excess, we had not discovered any one peculiarly interesting among the many tourists who, like ourselves, had made this charming resort a halting-place on their travels; indeed, so merry and congenial was our own little party, that we needed no new element to add to our enjoyment.

It was a lovely evening in July, and as we sat listening to the band, Fred proposed that we should devote the following day to a grand fishing-excursion, taking with us some provisions, with a view to picnicking upon one of the islands. His suggestion met with unanimous approval; and before retiring for the night, we had hired a boat, and ordered a luncheon-basket to be in readiness at nine o'clock the next morning.

The bright sunlight streaming into our room awoke us early to the pleasant consciousness that neither rain nor clouds were likely to mar our anticipated enjoyment; and after a hasty breakfast, we started in high glee, and were soon ensconced in a commodious boat, provided with everything in the way of fishing-rods, lines, hooks, and bait, that the most ardent sportsman could desire. It was our intention to row some five or six miles down the river, keeping towards the Canadian side, where, as our boatman informed us, the waters were not so completely fished out as in the immediate vicinity of the hotel.

As we proceeded, the noble river, which shone like a burnished mirror in the morning sun, became more thickly studded with islands, some large and richly wooded, others hardly more than picturesque rocks, whose pink granite, tapestried with many-coloured lichens, formed a rare and beautiful contrast with the delicate green of the young pines, which almost invariably crowned their summits; while here and there, pretty little white lighthouses stood out in bold relief against the cloudless sky. A scene of more peaceful and fairy-like beauty it would be impossible to imagine; nor was even volatile Fred insensible to its influence.

After rowing for more than an hour, we anchored for still-fishing, not without many a joke as to who should catch the first and the largest fish. We had all heard of the wonderful muskallong of the St Lawrence, which have been known to weigh from thirty to forty pounds; and each secretly anticipated capturing no meaner prey; but, to our sorrow, we learned that it was not the season for taking those fish, although more than once during the day we saw them leap out



of the water in a most tantalising manner. Fred, who had made a special purchase of new tackle, selected with much care one of the liveliest minnows from the pail, and handled his rod with all the confidence of an old piscator. He had hardly spun his minnow once or twice, when he exclaimed: 'By Jove! a bite, and a splendid fellow it must be!' It was certainly something out of the common, to judge by the tremendous resistance he encountered; but, alas! he discovered, to his great mortification, that it was only his line which had become entangled among the rocks at the bottom; and when he recovered it, it was minus both bait and hooks. I had always decried angling as a cruel pastime, and declared that I could not understand any one enjoying it; but, alas! for the inconsistency of poor human nature! I soon forgot my compassionate scruples in the pleasurable anxiety and excitement of watching for a bite; and when, after a short time, a vigorous tug announced that some hungry denizen of the St Lawrence had been tempted to swallow my minnow, no young author was ever prouder of seeing his first work in print than I was, when, with the assistance of our gallant boatman, I succeeded in pulling in my first fish, a fine pickerel, some five pounds in weight! In vain Fred slyly inquired if I did not think it very cruel; I turned a deaf ear to his innuendos, and my triumph was further increased by the fact that I alone seemed to be favoured by fortune; so, when the hour arrived at which we purposed refreshing the inner man, I felt myself to be a person of no small importance, having provided dinner for the rest of the party.

We decided upon dining on a large island known as Grenadiers, and, running the boat into a little creek, effected an easy landing. It soon became evident that we had not been singular in our choice; another boat lay there, moored to a tree, and close by the water-side stood a young man engaged in weighing a fish of pretty large dimensions. On our approach he raised his head and his hat, and courteously inquired if we had had good sport. My sister and I, modest maidens as we were, kept a little in the background during the colloquy which followed, until my father called us, and introducing the stranger as Mr Roy Percival, proposed that we should join forces, and dine together. In this arrangement our new acquaintance willingly acquiesced; and remarking that he knew of a pretty spot, led the way to a little grove, where his boatman had already kindled a bright fire, over which a kettle was swung in true gipsy fashion; while a large frying-pan, a pot of potatoes, and sundry other edibles, betokened preparations for a substantial repast. After giving a few directions, we seated ourselves on a mossy bank close by, and while the gentlemen discussed with the ardour of true sportsmen, the noble science of angling at home and abroad, I took the opportunity of studying the addition to our party. Call it instinct, or discrimination, or whatever you please, I have generally found my first impressions of people to prove pretty correct, and my verdict in this instance was decidedly favourable.

Mr Percival looked every inch a gentleman. Without being actually handsome, his frank, intelligent countenance, deeply embrowned by the summer sun, his large gray eyes, and firm, well-shaped mouth, bore the impress of a true and

kindly nature; add to these items, hair, moustache, and whiskers of that rare real brown, so much to be admired, and a tall, well-built figure, attired in a very becoming yachting-suit of dark blue, and you have a fair portrait of Roy Percival, as I first beheld him, in one of the loveliest spots that ever gladdened the eye of man.

In due time we were seated at a well-spread table, extemporised out of the seats and cushions of the boat; and never did hungry mortals enjoy a dinner more. Everything was delicious! Such bread, butter, and tea we never tasted before; and as to my fish, the *pièce de résistance* at the banquet, the flavour of it was unanimously pronounced to be 'perfectly elegant!'

After doing ample justice to our repast, we started for a stroll over the island, and I found myself walking with Mr Percival. Observing that I gathered wild-flowers as we went along, he took some trouble to add to my collection, and appeared to be well acquainted with the names and peculiarities of our mosses and ferns. In short, we had an extremely pleasant conversation upon various subjects, in which my companion proved himself to be a man of refinement and education. During our chat, he informed me that he was an Irishman, who had come over to America chiefly for the benefit of the sea-voyage, after a long and severe illness. He had been travelling in Canada and elsewhere, and spoke with admiration of our country, seeming pleased and amused at my patriotic fervour; but, far too soon it appeared to me, the rest of the party announced their intention to return to the boat, and our enjoyable walk came to an end. We then said *au revoir*, expecting to see him in the evening, as he was staying at an adjacent hotel, and had promised to visit our ballroom.

Our afternoon's fishing resulted only in the capture of two or three small bass; so, as we wound up our tackle, it ended in my claiming the best 'basket.' The hours passed away, and evening came on. The sun went down like a blood-red glowing ball, bridging the river with its rosy reflection, then there was

No light in earth or heaven  
But the cold light of stars,

save, here and there, the fires of camping-out parties glimmering through the trees. Many a merry glee and ringing chorus we sang as we glided across the dark waters.

Whether Mr Percival found his way to our hotel or not, we were destined to remain in ignorance, owing to a rather amusing catastrophe which occurred shortly after we entered the ballroom. The gas, which until then had certainly burned with much brilliancy, grew visibly dimmer and dimmer, and eventually went out entirely, leaving the assembled crowds in darkness and consternation! All efforts to relight it proving unavailing, we adjourned to the piazza; and, on re-entering the hotel, beheld the novel spectacle of some hundreds of people perambulating the halls and corridors, each carrying a mould-candle, mounted in those most primitive of candlesticks, bottles, of every size and description! As we were pretty well fatigued after our long day in the open air, this contretemps did not annoy us much; we retired to our rooms, and were soon sound asleep, nor did I even dream of Mr Percival.

On the following morning, we resumed our journey, starting by an early boat for Montreal. Of our further travels, which are in no way connected with my story, I shall merely say, that after two or three delightful weeks spent at Lake George, Trenton Falls, and the Catskills, I was glad to return to the old home-life in Brooklyn, New York, where we lived our various adventures o'er and o'er again, in recounting them to numerous interested and sympathising friends; nor did I escape a certain amount of good-natured quizzing about the interesting stranger who had evidently made an impression on me, which assertion of course I indignantly denied.

Months passed away. To the dazzling, sultry summer succeeded the clear days and cool nights of that most delightful of seasons, the American Fall. Then the trees donned their many-coloured autumn hues; the flaming sumach, the yellow chestnut, and, more beautiful than all, the graceful maple, with its green and yellow leaves flecked with blood-red, clothed the woods with glory. Many a pleasant excursion we made to gather these bright-tinted treasures, with which we decorated every available corner in parlour and boudoir, until not even the fairest blossoms of spring could have made them look gayer! But after the beautiful Indian summer, the winter set in with unusual severity; snow covered the ground, and the rinks and lakes were thronged with merry skaters. Christmas, with its mirth and feasting, was over, and now all thoughts were centred on New-year's Day, the great day in our country, when, as it is generally known, the ladies remain at home to receive their gentlemen friends, married and single; nor are any male members of the household privileged to appear upon the scene, as they are or ought to be on the road themselves.

Alice and I were very much on the *qui vive*, as each of us, girl-fashion, had her own favourite, to whose visit she looked forward with special pleasure. Mine was a certain Mr Harry Stanwood, an intimate friend and near neighbour. He was an extremely good-looking and likeable young man of twenty-four, and was possessed of considerable means. This was rather an unusual combination, for, as a rule, 'eligibles' are insupportable—the *really* nice men being generally poor. The eventful day arrived. Alice and I were early seated in the parlour, 'got up' in *recherché* toilets of light-gray silk, with blue sashes and elegant laces; I wore in my dark hair some pale pink rose-buds, Harry's gift, and looked as well as most people.

Before long, our visitors came trooping in, young, old, and middle-aged, some merely with a 'how-d'-ye-do,' and 'good-bye,' others making a longer stay, and patronising some of the good things provided for them. Many old and valued friends of my mother enjoyed a cosy chat with her; while her daughters 'carried on,' after the manner of maidens, with the younger portion of the callers. Cousin Fred came early, and was engaged in an animated conversation with Alice, whose favourite he was, when another ring at the door, and the tones of a familiar voice, announced the arrival of Harry Stanwood. Whatever my feelings might have been as he entered, they were certainly indescribable when I saw behind him the stranger of the Thousand Islands; nor was my astonishment greater than that of Harry, when he saw me shake

hands cordially with Mr Percival, and speak of the unexpected pleasure of meeting him again.

'Why, I was not aware that Mr Percival was a friend of yours!' he exclaimed. 'You never mentioned him to me.'

Before I could explain, the gentleman in question related, in his quiet, amusing way, the circumstances of our meeting; adding, that he had been unexpectedly detained in New York for an indefinite time on business, and there had met Mr Stanwood at the house of a mutual friend. Being a stranger, he was glad to accompany him on his visiting expedition, without, however, having the least idea that one of the calls would be on our family. Harry, who had nearly two hundred names on his list, carried off his friend in less than ten minutes, promising, however, to return in the evening, when we purposed having a little dance. One visitor followed another in quick succession till after seven o'clock, when we had a few minutes' respite to prepare for our invited guests.

Harry and his friend came early. The former was in great spirits, and, as usual, the life of the party. Mr Percival was not much of a dancer, and as I generally found him at my side when I was not otherwise engaged, we had a good deal of conversation, which did not lessen the favourable opinion I already entertained of him.

Our conversation never flagged, one topic leading easily to another, till we were amazed to find how time had flown by. One thing he said that evening I remembered at a future day. Some one happening to speak of a young lady in New York whose engagement to a friend of ours had been recently broken off, Alice remarked that, really, some girls seemed to be in a chronic state of engagement, and to think no more of it than of accepting a partner for a valse.

'It is so, I regret to say,' said Mr Percival very gravely. 'For my part, I look upon an engagement as a very serious thing, and 'by no means to be entered upon lightly, nor without well-grounded hopes of a happy termination in marriage.'

When our company had left, and we gathered round the fire for a cosy family chat, my mother declared Mr Percival to be a most agreeable and desirable acquaintance, and expressed a hope that he might make a long stay in New York. I said nothing, but thought the more.

Although residing at some little distance from us—he being in New York City, and we in Brooklyn—Mr Percival was no unfrequent visitor. In course of time we learned that he was the only son of an Irish gentleman, whose profession had formerly been very lucrative, but who now, owing to a severe attack of paralysis, was little more than a crippled invalid. Upon Roy, therefore, devolved, at an early age, the entire responsibility of the family, consisting, besides himself, of his mother and a younger sister. His own severe illness had still further straitened their slender means; but on his recovery, being offered an opportunity of pursuing his calling on the other side of the Atlantic, he had thus been enabled to visit our country, and expected to be detained for some time in New York.

During our walks we talked very seriously sometimes, for Roy Percival was no thoughtless trifler, but one to whom life was both real and earnest. Earnestness and sincerity were indeed

the prominent features of his character, allied to a genuine kindness of heart, which extended itself even to the brute creation, with which he was an especial favourite. A well-known poet has said :

He prayeth well who loveth well  
Both man, and bird, and beast.

This I firmly believe ; while, on the other hand, one who can be guilty of the detestable cowardice of ill-treating a helpless animal, is in my opinion capable of anything bad.

Of course, I did not find out all this about Mr Percival in a day, nor even in a month ; but from time to time, little by little, as, under varied circumstances, one point of his character after another came out into relief ; and the more I saw of him, and the better I knew him, the more I liked and esteemed him. And he ? I have no secrets from you, gentle reader ; the liking was certainly mutual ; but beyond that, our intercourse was strictly within the limits of simple good friendship, nor had a single word been spoken of a nature likely to disturb the frank and pleasant relations between us. Happy in the present, I cared not to think of the uncertain future, nor sought to analyse my own feelings ; what they were, I was soon to learn.

How often does love lie dormant in the heart of a young maiden, its presence unsuspected even by herself, until some sudden alarm, some unexpected incident, startles the intruder from his hiding-place !

Such an awakening was mine, one bright September evening, when Harry burst into the room where we were sitting, with : 'Just fancy, Mrs Howard and all ! Percival had a cable this morning which necessitates his immediate return to Ireland ; in fact, he is to sail in the *Egypt* next Saturday !'

There was a universal expression of surprise and regret. For a moment I could not speak ; I felt as if some one had given me a stunning blow ; but with a strong effort, assuming a rather indifferent tone, I remarked : 'Why, this is Thursday ! I suppose we cannot expect to see him before he goes !'

'O yes ; he said he should certainly come over to wish you good-bye. I spend to-night with him, and only ran across to tell you the news.'

I was very thankful that Harry did not remain, as I was able to pretend to be entirely absorbed in an interesting book, until, without attracting attention, I could escape to my own little room. There, undressing like one in a dream, and mechanically locking the door, I sought my welcome bed, and tried to realise what I had heard.

He was going away ! Over and over again I told myself the bitter truth. Why should I care so much ? Ah ! that was the hardest thing to bear—he was everything to me, and I was nothing to him ; so, unrestrained by the presence of others, I wept long and bitterly, till, overcome with weariness, I fell asleep.

Thrice welcome the blessed forgetfulness of sleep, but all the worse the re-awakening to the sad reality. How I dreaded the parting ! I hated saying good-bye, and to him. All that wretched Friday I occupied myself busily with household matters, and even laughed when they rallied me on his departure. When he came, his voice sent a sickening thrill through my heart, and I felt the hot blood surge to my temples ; yet I met him with a smile, and talked as gaily as the rest ; but

when he said that it was late, and he must go, and actually rose from his seat, my lips quivered, and only with a painful effort could I keep the tears from springing to my eyes.

He came to me last, and said—not 'good-bye ;' that I was spared—but, 'Good-night ; I hope we may meet again, Miss Nathalie.' I know he held my hand longer than usual ; he seemed to hesitate as he followed the others into the hall, and turning back once more, said again, 'Good-night, Miss Nathalie ; God bless you !' That was all.

I know well, for I have seen it, that many girls situated as I was would have sought and found comfort in the sympathy of some dear and confidential friend of their own sex. Far be it from me to censure them, but such was not my temperament. Once conscious myself that I loved, my very first thought was sedulously to conceal the fact from all others. Not even my own beloved and most tender of mothers dare for an instant suspect the existence of a secret which I resolved to bury like a forbidden thing in the recesses of my own bosom. I hold it, there comes a time in the life of every true woman who has ever loved, when, be she never so ingenious, she must dissimulate, or else, at the sacrifice of all maidenly reserve, lay bare the most sacred feelings of her heart.

When I awoke the next morning, it would have taken a very keen observer to detect any traces of the struggle within. The passion of grief was over ; I only felt as if all the sunshine had gone out of my life, and a kind of despairing apathy crept upon me, which so well passed current for indifference, that, though the very mention of Mr Percival's name made my heart beat faster, I succeeded beyond my expectations in appearing even more unconcerned than the rest. I remember how Alice said to me one day : 'Do you know, Natty, I once imagined you thought a good deal of Mr Percival ; but you do not seem to miss him at all.' What did she know of the weary days, the restless nights, the anxious suspense, until the first letter came announcing his safe arrival ! It was to Harry, and in it he said : 'Give my kind regards to Miss Nathalie, and all your Fireside.'

How my foolish heart leaped when I heard it ! Was I then foremost in his thoughts, something more to him than the others ? I sternly forbade myself the delusion, and determined to try and forget him. I joined a literary society, I took singing lessons, I studied, practised, and visited with indefatigable energy ; but if during the busy day I thus succeeded in some measure in banishing him from my thoughts, when night came, with its darkness and inaction, many a long hour would I lie awake and think of him, of 'what might have been'—of what might yet be. Dared I look forward to anything ? He certainly said he hoped we should meet again. 'That meant something,' whispered flattering Hope. 'What folly ! Any friend would say the same,' cried sober Reason ; and yet—

Months passed away. Christmas was again approaching, and to those around me the bleak December brought new gladness. Alice was to be married to Fred on the 17th, and all were busy preparing for the wedding. I was not exactly unhappy—that I could scarcely be in a home like mine, but ever conscious of a void in my life which neither home nor kindred could fill. Another

thing also disturbed my peace of mind. I have spoken of Harry as a dear and intimate friend; such he had always been to me. Playmates in early childhood, I had ever felt for him simply a sisterly affection, nor for one moment anticipated his looking upon me in any other light; and although, during my acquaintance with Mr Percival, I might have seen somewhat less of him, my feelings were quite unchanged, and I always rejoiced to have him make one of our circle.

A few days before the wedding, Alice said to me: 'Nathalie, I verily believe Harry Stanwood is falling in love with you.'

'What nonsense!' I exclaimed; 'why, we have known each other since we were that high!' designating a very Lilliputian measurement with my hand and the floor. 'We are just like brother and sister.'

'So I thought. But mark my words: he is beginning to feel differently towards you.'

While I scouted the idea as ridiculous, it nevertheless occasioned me uneasiness. How was I to act? To a friend like him I could not be cold and distant; and yet, if by maintaining my usual frank demeanour, I led him to entertain false hopes, I should ever reproach myself. Had I never met Roy Percival, it might have been otherwise; but, forbid that I should marry one man, loving another better!

Such was my state of mind when the wedding-day arrived. Alice was married at seven in the evening in our own pretty little church, and a large number of friends attended the reception in our house. Ever since my suspicions had been aroused, I had carefully avoided being left alone with Harry, and had managed to be as little as possible in his society; but before leaving that night, he reminded me that I had promised to go out sleighing with him the following day, and arranged to call for me at eleven o'clock. What was I to do? I knew he would be greatly disappointed if I refused, nor had I any excuse for breaking my promise; so I said 'All right,' thinking it was 'all wrong,' and looked forward with anything but enviable feelings to the ride.

At the hour appointed, Harry and the sleigh were at the door; and he little thought how reluctantly I took my place beside him. I never saw him look handsomer; but his manner struck me as unusually nervous; however, we talked pretty fluently on various subjects, until we turned to drive home through Prospect Park, when he suddenly asked me if Roy Percival was coming back to America again. The question startled me not a little. 'Why, Harry, what has put him into your head? I'm sure I neither know nor care,' I was going to add, but the falsehood died on my lips.

'Nor care,' said Harry, finishing the sentence. 'O Nathalie, if you knew how badly I once felt because I thought you *did* care! yet I determined not to stand between you and a fellow far better than I; but now, since I see I was mistaken, Nathalie, darling, you know all I want to tell you!'

Too well I knew; but I answered as quietly as I could: 'What are you saying, Harry? You know I am as fond of you as ever, my adopted brother.'

'Do not call me that!' he cried almost fiercely; then more gently, as he took my hand: 'Nathalie, you must understand I love you; will you be my

own dear little wife?' The pain he was causing me must have been written in my face, for he continued: 'Do not answer me now: you do not know your own heart; I have surprised you.'

'Harry,' I said, speaking very slowly and distinctly, 'I must say all I have to say now. I am so sorry—very, very sorry—that this has happened. I wish I could have prevented it, for I cannot marry you—I cannot love you as you wish.'

He let go my hand, and turned very pale, but only said in a changed tone: 'Do you then give me no hope, Nathalie?'

'I cannot—I dare not, dear friend. I must be true to myself and to you.'

We spoke but little during the remainder of our ride, and, on arriving, Harry refused to come in. His abrupt departure, and my tell-tale face, quickly betrayed that something unusual had happened, and I confided all to my mother, who only said: 'Poor children! I am sorry for both of you. Are you certain you are doing right, my daughter?'

Was I in the right to inflict such pain on a noble nature, to refuse a true heart and a happy home, all for the sake of one whom I might never see again?

I had a strange dream that night, which wonderfully tranquillised my mind, and made me feel glad that I had not acted otherwise.

I thought that I stood in a little wood expecting Mr Percival, who had told me to await his return. Many friends came begging me to join them, and, among others, Harry, who was angry when I refused. It began to storm; but though the rain fell in torrents, and the lightning zigzagged through the trees, I waited still for Roy, and he came at last. In my dream I felt how he took me in his arms, and tenderly said: 'Did you think I had forgotten you, my darling!' and his voice seemed ringing in my ears when I awoke.

Poor Harry! he soon afterwards went off on a tour in South America, and with him I lost my only chance of hearing anything of Mr Percival. Letters had come from him occasionally, and Harry often read part of them to us. Need I say I was no inattentive listener!

If I have not already wearied you, gentle reader, will you bear with me a little longer, and imagine that several months have elapsed since that day in December. Harry had returned from his tour in March, and, strange as it may appear, we were almost on our old footing of intimate friendship. Of a sanguine and buoyant temperament, he was not one to brood over trouble; and, however poignant his feelings might have been when his hopes were first disappointed, time and absence had effectually restored his usual gay spirits. He was again away on a visit to the south, nor had we heard from him for some weeks.

It was a lovely afternoon in the beginning of May, and I was just thinking of that time twelvemonth, when I was startled by an exclamation from my mother, who had taken up the newspaper, and was bestowing upon its contents that cursory glance so characteristic of most feminine readers.

'Nathalie! can it be our old friend, Roy Percival?'

'What of him?' I asked carelessly, without looking up from the music I was copying, which I accidentally disfigured with a large blot.



'Why, among the arrivals in the *Erin* I see the names of Mr and Mrs Roy Percival. If it is the same—and the name is uncommon—he must be married!'

I felt sick and dizzy; for a moment, everything was dark before my eyes; but appearing still intent on what I was doing, I replied cheerfully: 'I guess it is the same; he always had a great fancy for America. I hope he has a nice wife.'

My father coming in at that instant, I left the room upon some pretext, and took refuge in my own little sanctum, which could have told so many tales.

As I knelt down by the open window to let the cool breeze fan my burning brow, the bright sunshine and the merry chirping of the birds in the yard seemed to mock my misery. It was so hopeless now! Yet what else had I been looking for? I had been hoping against fate. What claim had I upon him that he should not marry, and bring his wife to see me, and expect me to welcome her? Would he come? Certainly; for that I prepared myself. Mentally, I rehearsed the meeting; what I should say; with what dignified, yet kindly composure I should receive them; yet, in spite of all my resolutions, every ring at the door sent a shock through my frame, and I trembled for the firmness of my self-command!

The next day was Friday. A sleepless night and so many hours of feverish suspense were more than I could bear; I was really ill; and yielding to the earnest solicitations of my mother, reluctantly consented to remain at home while the others went to the weekly prayer-meeting.

They had scarcely been gone ten minutes, when a ring at the hall-door bell made my every nerve tingle. I had been standing idly at the back window; but hastily snatching some crochet-work of my mother's from the table—I had not the remotest idea how to manipulate it—I had seated myself on a sofa with my back to the light, before the girl announced 'Mr Percival!'

As he entered, his face brightened. I never saw him look better, 'nor happier,' I thought, with a pang of jealousy which I could not wholly suppress. My heart beat so violently, I could hardly speak; however, with some faintly uttered words of welcome, I advanced to take the hand which so warmly grasped mine. After various inquiries, which I am sure I answered at random, for I did not exactly know what I was saying, he remarked: 'You were surely surprised to see me?'

'Not greatly, as we had seen the arrival in the *New York Times*.'

'Indeed! I had not time to look at the papers yesterday.'

'I hope Mrs Percival did not suffer during the passage?' I asked, determined to broach the subject myself.

'Oh, not at all, thank you! She is a capital sailor. She would have come to see you to-night, only she has a bad cold.'

'I wonder, will she like America as well as you?'

'I hope so; though at her age one does not become so easily acclimatised.'

At her age! Then she was not young.

'She is very anxious to meet you,' he continued; 'I have often spoken of you. Won't you soon come to see her?—and Mrs Howard too? I am sure she and my mother will get on famously.'

His mother! What did he mean? Could there be any mistake?

'I hope you left your mother and sister well?' I asked. With what anxiety I awaited the answer!

'Left—my—mother!' he echoed slowly. 'Why, we have been talking about *her* for the last ten minutes!'

In an instant the truth flashed across my mind. It was his *mother*, not his wife, who was the lady named in the paper! He also seemed to suspect some strange misapprehension.

'Of whom else could you have possibly thought I was speaking?' he asked, with a funny look in his eyes. 'Come, now, confess!' seeing that I hesitated.

Well, what do you suppose I did then? Alas for my dignified composure! The sudden reaction in my own feelings, and a keen sense of the absurdity of the position, were too much for me; I answered him with an uncontrollable fit of laughter! He waited patiently till the paroxysm had subsided, then quietly repeated his question.

'Well, the fact is,' I stammered out, while I felt my cheek crimson beneath his gaze, 'I thought—that is—from the way the names were in the paper, we were all sure that it was your wife!'

He did not laugh, but looked at me with a curious kind of serio-comic expression in his face, and crossing over to the sofa, seated himself beside me, and began to examine the tangled and ravelled remains of my poor mother's crochet.

'So you thought I was married, Miss Nathalie,' he said at length; 'you were wrong, but I hope soon to be!'

'Is that so?' I asked, bending still lower over my imaginary work.

'I said I *hoped*, for it entirely depends on you!'

'On me!' I involuntarily murmured.

'Yes, on you,' he repeated, in a voice of deep emotion. 'I ought not—I did not mean to ask you to-night, but I have waited long weary months, and I *must* speak now. O Nathalie! you little knew how bitter that parting was to me—how I yearned to take you in my arms, and tell you all you were to me; and when I fancied I saw your sweet lips quiver, my firmness nearly failed me. *Dear Nathalie*,' he continued, in low pleading tones, while he took my unresisting hands in his, 'will you trust yourself to me?—will you now give me the right to take you to the heart so truly yours?'

Mine was too full to speak, and glad tears stood in my eyes; I raised them to his, and he read his answer there.

'At last!' he exclaimed joyously, as he put his arm around me, and gently drew me close to his side; 'my *own* precious little girl!'

With a sense of unutterable rest and peace, I laid my weary head on his breast; and for some moments we were silent in the intensity of our happiness.

Then, in the deepening dusk, he told me how he had longed for this hour, yet felt that for him it could never come while his helpless father lived; nor would he enter upon any engagement with such indefinite hopes for the future. 'Poor old man!' he said; 'he died just three months ago, with his last breath committing to me, as a sacred charge, the care of his wife and daughter. A most opportune legacy has placed them above all need;

and my sister, who is at present on a visit with some friends in England, will shortly rejoin my mother in Brooklyn, where they purpose to reside.'

All this, and much more, we talked of, as we sat together that blessed evening, forgetful of all else, until a ring at the door announced the return of my parents, who had delayed to visit a friend. There was little need of explanation. Roy's proud radiant face and my happy blushes told the whole story; and never was son-in-law more heartily welcomed than Roy Percival.

The next day he took me to see his mother—a dear old lady, who received me with all a mother's affection; and, as he prophesied, Mrs Howard and Mrs Percival became great cronies. About three months afterwards, we had a very quiet wedding; no fuss nor formality, and only our dearest and most intimate friends to wish us 'God-speed' on our way. We went home at once to our own cunning little house, which we had spent many a happy hour furnishing and fixing to our taste. Mrs Percival boarded at some little distance. Under the same roof with us she would not remain—although we urged her to do so, at least till her daughter arrived.

'No, my dear children,' she said; 'when young birds can do for themselves, the parent bird leaves them to themselves; forbid that I should transgress one of the wisest laws of nature!'

Before concluding, I may as well mention that, about a year later, a paragraph might have been seen in the *New York Times*, to the effect that a certain Mr Harry Stanwood and a Miss Florence Percival had seen fit to enter upon married life.

A word more, and I have done. Among my wedding-presents was one which I dearly prized. It was a beautiful painting by an eminent American artist, and hangs in the most honoured place in my parlour, a delightful reminder of the spot where first I saw my Friend of the Thousand Islands.

#### CHANGES IN LAND AND WATER.

It is a fact not generally considered, that the surface of the globe is continually undergoing change. Materials washed from dry land are daily hurrying down rivers into the sea, and the sea, while filling up at one place, is encroaching on the land at others. There is a class of phenomena less observable, but equally tending to change. One continent or island is slowly rising, increasing the height of the cliffs, and laying bare a strip of beach previously covered with water; while another is slowly sinking, causing strips of shore to disappear beneath the waves, and lessening the apparent height of cliffs and headlands. What is the nature of the vast internal forces that bring about these changes—whether condensed bodies of air, pent-up subterranean reservoirs of water, gaseous expansions and contractions, or volcanic chemical reactions beneath the earth's crust—science may possibly one day tell us; at present the materials have not been collected for so doing. The rapidity of the changes varies quite as much as their nature. In some localities, men in the middle or later years of life can

remember that the coast-line in their early days was farther out or farther in than it is now; in others, a whole century has been necessary to render the change measurable or even appreciable; while in others the change may have been in progress for thousands of years, for aught we can tell.

The *deltas* of mighty rivers, both in the Old and the New continents, exhibit in a striking manner the kind of action last adverted to—the growth of land by the deposition of mud, silt, and sand. The beautiful Lake of Geneva, upwards of forty miles long, is gradually filling up. The Rhone enters the eastern end of the lake, bringing so much mud and silt from the Alps as to render the water quite turbid; it quits the lake at the western end with the water clear and beautiful. Nearly all the mud has been deposited in the lake itself. As a consequence, the lake is becoming shallower, and strips of dry land are gradually forming at the margin. The old town of Port Vallais was once at the water's edge; it is now nearly two miles inland, the intervening strip having changed its character from sea to fertile land. By the time the same river Rhone reaches the Mediterranean, it has collected a new cargo of silt and sand, which it deposits at the mouth, and is there forming a delta of alluvial soil. What were once the small islands of Mese and Psalmodi are now joined to the mainland by strips of this sediment; and a tower on the coast a century and a half ago, is now a mile or more inland. The Adriatic Sea, eastward of Italy, is gradually being choked up at the northern end by river-silt, mostly brought down by the Po. Adria, Ravenna, Spina, were all sea-side towns when first built; they are now from four miles to twenty miles inland. The ancient hot-baths of Monfalcone were once on an island; the island has long since been connected with the mainland by a grassy plain. The northern parts of Europe exhibit similar phenomena. For instance, the whole of Holland may in one sense be regarded as the delta of the Rhine, formed of the sediment brought down and deposited by that river during countless ages. The Gulf of Bothnia is gradually becoming shallower, and strips of newly formed dry land are appearing; partly from silt deposit, partly (it is surmised) from a slow rising of the earth's crust in that part of Europe.

But what are European rivers compared with those of Asia? The mighty Ganges, during its long and winding course from the Himalaya, brings down enormous quantities of solid matter, which it deposits at its mouth in the Bay of Bengal. Here has been formed a delta called the *Sunderbunds*, once clear open sea, now a wilderness tenanted by tigers and alligators, and permeated by numerous 'mouths of the Ganges.' In round numbers, the dry land has robbed the sea of some two hundred miles' width of margin. The Indus, in like manner, though in smaller degree, is robbing the sea, by forming a delta at its estuary or cluster of mouths. Mud is generally interpreted by us simply as an annoyance, not as a heavy substance; but the weight of mud brought down by some of the great rivers is almost inconceivably great. A calculation has been made, that in a hundred and twenty-two days of the rainy season, the Ganges brings down *six thousand million cubic feet* of earthy matter! Sir Charles Lyell points out that

this would more than equal, in bulk if not in weight, forty of the greatest pyramids of Egypt.

The Athara, a tributary of the Nile, the sources of which appear to be farther and farther away the more our explorers search for them, has formed the fertile Delta of Egypt by bringing down enormous quantities of silt from Abyssinia. It is believed that the Mediterranean once washed the very base of Memphis itself; how far that spot is now from the great sea any map of Egypt will tell us. The whole bed of the lower Nile is being raised by the deposit of millions upon millions of tons of mud after every rainy season. In America, the Mississippi is telling a similar tale.

Many patches of dry land on our own shores are gradually being formed by the subsidence of river-mud, by the deposit of shingle brought by tides and currents, and by slow elevating of the land itself. In the townland of Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, a tract of four hundred acres has, in the course of centuries, been stolen from the Firth of Forth. The Esk brings down a quantity of silt; this, checked by the tide of the Firth of Forth, is deposited on the beach, where, meeting with boulders and shingle, it gradually forms solid ground; and on this ground, once covered with sea-water, the greater part of the town stands. Along the coast of Norfolk are many sandy tracts stolen from the sea, chiefly by the deposit of loose sand across the mouths of rivers, the carrying agent being the tides and currents of the German Ocean. The Wash is gradually silting up in a different way. The rivers Nene, Welland, Witham, and Ouse pour into this wide estuary vast quantities of soil brought down from the neighbouring counties, and deposit it all round the margin. As a consequence, the Wash is becoming shallower and shallower; the bed is being elevated; the outlets of the rivers are nearly choked with mud at low tide; while at high tide, the fertile lands of the interior are in danger of being flooded with a rush of sea-water. Millions of money have been spent in deepening the channels of the rivers, making new cuts to facilitate the outflow, and embanking the silted-up margins of shore. Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, and Lincolnshire have been well rewarded for the outlay by the fertilisation of long stretches of newly consolidated land, formerly covered by the sea. Patches of dry land have been formed in a similar way on some parts of the coast of Kent. Winchelsea, Rye, and Sandwich were at one time seaport towns; they have now only a faint claim to that title. In some places the sickle and the scythe are seen at work where not long ago was salt sea; at others, the margin can scarcely thus be utilised. Poor Sandwich looks dismally at the wide expanse of mud that fronts the town twice every day when the tide is out; the mud is neither useful nor ornamental; vessels cannot sail through it, nor can crops be cultivated on it.

According to law in the British Islands, the strip of muddy or shingly beach between high-water mark and low-water mark, called the *foreshore*, belongs to Queen Victoria, or to the sovereign for the time being; as also the bed of the sea for a few miles out. So long as these strips are useless, nobody cares about them; but if ever they become dry land, the sovereign claims them. In bygone centuries, many such have been granted away by charter to corporate bodies and lords of manors. The foreshore of Cornwall has in this way been

granted to the Duchy of Cornwall. A few years ago, a curious suit was tried—the Queen *versus* her own son—the sovereign against the Prince of Wales as Duke of Cornwall. Of course, the two august personages had very little to do with the matter; the land commissioners on the one side found it necessary to come to some agreement with those on the other, as to certain doubtful matters of grants and claims. When any reclamation from the sea takes place in spots unquestionably regarded as royal foreshore, an easy money payment, as premium or rental, settles the matter of occupancy.

A counterbalancing loss, however, is going on. As we have observed, if the land robs the sea in one part, the sea robs the land in another. This is familiarly exemplified by the rubbing and grinding away of coasts and cliffs, especially on the eastern shores, by tides and currents. There is a reason for this which we seldom think about. When tides and currents roll in from the Atlantic, the British Islands act as a kind of cutwater, splitting the stream into two parts. One body of water flows in between England and France; then, turning northward, flows up the German Ocean towards the North Sea. The other body laves the shores of Ireland, the west-coast of Scotland, the Hebrides, the Orkneys, and the Shetlands, and then turns down into the North Sea, between Britain on the one side, Norway and Denmark on the other. What is the consequence? Tide meets tide, current meets current; and the coasts suffer in the *mêlée*.

Travellers who have visited the Shetland Islands tell us that the bold cliffs are worn and torn and riven in an extraordinary way. Sir Charles Lyell describes the cliffs as being hollowed into deep caves and lofty arches; headlands and promontories assume the fantastic forms of columns, pinnacles, turrets, and obelisks; huge blocks have been driven hundreds of feet away; and the sea has forced a passage through rocks of the hardest porphyry.

Coming south, to the eastern coast of the Scottish mainland, it is found that the destructive force of the waters is less violent. Where is the old town of Findhorn, in Morayshire? Gone; the sea has ground it away, and then swallowed it. In a similar way has disappeared the village of Mathers, in Kincardineshire. Bending round, past Peterhead and Aberdeen, we find evidences that, near Arbroath, gardens and houses have gradually been submerged. The first lighthouse at the mouth of the Tay was built on a portion of coast which is now quite under water. On the opposite coast of Fife, at St Andrews, the sea is gradually claiming the land; Cardinal Beaton's Castle overhangs the cliff in some places, and must in time resign its stately proportions to the sea; while similar marine encroachments are evident all the way along to Fife Ness. The same may be said of Tantallon Castle, on the coast of Haddingtonshire, whose base the restless tide is gradually undermining. The shore between Newhaven and Leith, near Edinburgh, was until quite recently, considerably broader than it is now; and but for strong bulwarks which were laid just in time, the houses which now overlook the Firth of Forth, must have been undermined and washed away. As it is, the roadway of twenty years ago no longer exists.

The northern counties of England have had to

pass through some such ordeal as their Scottish neighbours; the sea has swallowed down more than it has given up, so far as concerns dry land. On the Northumberland coast, Bamborough has been shorn of much of its original proportions; while Tynemouth Castle, now on the very brink of the sea, had at one time a good stretch of fertile land between it and salt water. The Durham coast, especially about Hartlepool, tells many a similar tale to those who are able to read it aright. Yorkshire has suffered much more decidedly. Where there are cliffs of chalk, such as at Flamborough Head, caves have been scooped out by the waves, and portions of cliff isolated into fantastic needle and obelisk forms. Where the cliff or beach is lower, and composed of a mixture of chalk rubble, clay, gravel, and sand, the destruction has been more marked. We would look in vain for the old Yorkshire seaside towns or villages of Auburn, Hartburn, and Hyde; they are gone, buried beneath the waters. Hornsea, too, with Othwaite and Kilnsea, are gradually undergoing the same pitiless fate; middle-aged men can remember when the coast-line was farther out than it is now, while old men shake their heads at the amount of destruction they have witnessed. Sir George Head, describing what met his view at Holderness (as this part of the Yorkshire coast is called) says, concerning Kilnsea: 'I thought I had never seen human dwellings so critically placed; the houses huddled together on a bleak, bare spot, unrelieved by surrounding objects—a low promontory on a crumbling foundation, against which the waves continually beat with a heavy swell. Indeed, the imagination can hardly depict a more abrupt and daring position. Before entering the village, and immediately contiguous, the road leading to it at one particular part had already gone; while, in a line diverging from the chasm, rails were set up to direct the course of the night-traveller, and to prevent him from walking on straightforward into the sea. . . . Notwithstanding, hitherto such has been the apathy of the villagers, that many rested quietly for weeks together with the spray of the sea-storm rattling against their windows; and thus have remained till the ground has been almost torn from under their beds.'

In Lincolnshire, owing to the extreme flatness of the coast, and the level of many parts of the interior being below that of high-water, the sea has more frequently inundated the land than worn away cliffs; man has battled against it, not by removing houses and villages farther inland, but by raising seaside embankments. But, in Norfolk, the cliff-wearing has been in progress for an unknown number of centuries. The cliffs at Hunstanton are being eaten away yard by yard. An inn at Sheringham, built at what was believed to be a safe distance inland, is now close to the edge. The small pleasure-town of Cromer is *new* Cromer; the *old* town is now beneath the waves, and the new one seems likely to share the same fate by and by. Eccles is now represented only by the tower of the ruined church; all else is gone, as are the (once) seaside villages of Wimpwell and Shipden. Suffolk is no better off than its neighbour Norfolk. Dunwich has been travelling inland ever since it was Dunwich; new houses, churches, and public buildings having been erected farther back, as the old ones were washed away. Corton,

Aldborough, Pakefield, and Bawdsey have similarly been disturbed in their quietude.

Coming down to Kent, we find Reculver now represented by a ruined old church, washed at its base by the sea; Herne Bay, once really a bay, now scraped away to a straight line; the North Foreland dug into by the waves; the cliffs at Dover, Folkstone, and Hythe similarly worn; so are Hastings cliffs and Beachy Head. All along the coasts of Hants and Dorset the sea is robbing the land; especially near Lyme Regis, where the waves have wrought changes almost whimsical in their strangeness.

On the southern side of the Isle of Wight, facing the British Channel, sad havoc has been made by the encroachment of the sea. The cliffs being undermined by the tides, large masses have fallen down, and landslips of a picturesque kind produced. Some years ago, when at Ventnor, we observed with some concern that the tendency to destruction was greatly promoted by the mischievous practice of removing sand from the shingly beach, for building purposes. The sand which Nature threw up as a protection from the violence of the waves was systematically carted away. In the local press, we took the liberty of pointing out the danger of so damaging the beach, but without avail. At length, the authorities got a tremendous awaking from their lethargy. A heavy storm beating on the shore destroyed portions of the Promenade, and threatened the very foundations of the town. Alarmed for the consequences, the robbery of sand was stopped, but too late to preserve the original beauty of the beach. On a late occasion, when visiting the spot, it was distressing to see that the shore in front of the town was defaced by rows of stakes driven into the shingle for the purpose of averting any further injury. At much cost the town was saved, but a thing of beauty had from pure greed been sacrificed—a lesson to civic authorities who tamper with what Nature sends as a protection to a foreshore.

Lessons of this kind, however, are perhaps not always either agreeable or acceptable, particularly if it should occur that the parties who are expected to protect the beach from depredation are themselves the depredators, or are at all events lax in their guardianship. The old question arises—'Who are to keep the keepers?' Whoever be to blame, a great and it may be an irreparable error is committed when, possibly from sheer thoughtlessness, sand is removed from places where, besides being an attraction, it happens to serve as a bulwark against the violence of winds and tides. A scandalous case of sand-removal from a sea-shore has lately come under notice in connection with Portobello, a pleasant watering-place on the Firth of Forth near Edinburgh. The most magnificent sweep of sands, as far as we know, in Scotland, was in a wholesale manner made a habitual prey, and carted off without practical restriction, until, roused by the effects of a storm, the inhabitants got alarmed, and the spoliation was stopped. The mentioning of these cases may possibly be useful in drawing general attention to the subject. Where seaside residents are favoured with a fine beach, they cannot, as we think, be too vigilant in its preservation.

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